

Lambda Letters Project

Lavender Library, Archives
and Cultural Exchange
Sacramento, CA

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6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, California 95608

Phone (916) 965-6851

Lambda Letters Issue

32556

Why Cover People of Color Issues?

Some members have expressed concern about the addition of people of color issues to the agenda of the Lambda Letters Project, including concerns as to whether doing so will hurt us financially, whether or not our staff have the time to cover this issue, and whether or not doing so will reduce our effectiveness in the other areas we cover. The purpose of this article is to discuss some of those concerns.

Actually, adding the people of color issue will not increase our expenses and we hope to find a new legislative analyst to cover that topic. If so, no current staff person will have to stretch her or his time or add the new issue to an already busy work load.

All of us working on the project have long had strong sympathies for people of color and we

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January Annual Meeting/Board Meeting Accomplishes Much

On January 22nd Lambda Letters had its first annual membership meeting combined with the January Board meeting. A great deal was accomplished. For example, the first elected Board of Directors was chosen and the Board then elected its officers. (See the list of Board members on page 2 of this newsletter.) The Board also received a report on expenditures for 1993 and approved a budget for 1994. (See Tables 1 and 2 on page 3.) The new budget is an ambitious one and we will need all the financial support that you members can provide to meet the goals set by it. In addition, bylaws and articles of incorporation were approved. This will allow us to apply for incorporation and for tax-exempt status.

The Board also established a process for tracking and controlling expenditures to assure that all funds of the Project are used in the most efficient and honest fashion. It also received reports on fund-raising plans for the coming year. It was reported that Rosanna Herber and Karl Greene have agreed to manage our annual May auction. They will need help from volunteers to contact Sacramento-area businesses and ask for donations for the auction or to call our Sacramento-area members in early May to urge them to attend the auction. Anyone interested in helping out should call Boyce Hinman at (916) 965-6851. The Board also learned that a committee has been established to approach corporations

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Board Meeting

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who have been friendly to our community in an effort to persuade ten of them to contribute \$500 each to Lambda Letters.

The Board also received a report from Board member John Boyle on how California's state and federal legislators voted on key legislation during 1993. The purpose of this report was to determine whose voting records needed improvement and which legislators could be persuaded to improve if we increased the number of letters coming from constituents in their districts. The Board's intention is to target such districts and seek to increase our membership in them. The Board decided to begin by increasing our membership in the San Mateo-Santa Clara area. Members and friends living in that area are encouraged to spread the word and help us increase our membership in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Lambda Letters Project

Statement of Purpose

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and AIDS/HIV+ status advocacy and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and persons affected by or living with AIDS/HIV+ status into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof.

Board of Directors

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Mary Ann Murphy, Eureka, (707) 444-2775, Vice-Chair
Gretchen Jung, Sacramento, (916) 922-6287, Recorder
Ray Leber, Sacramento, (916) 925-5368, Treasurer
Joe Heller, Sacramento, (916) 454-0411
J.P. Rasmussen, San Diego, (619) 543-0059
Karen Roth, Davis, (916) 753-6670

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Joe Heller, Legislative Analyst: AIDS/HIV+ Status Issues, (916) 454-0411
Karen Roth, Legislative Analyst: Women's Issues, (916) 753-6670
Vacant, Legislative Analyst: People of Color Issues

Women's Issue

Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act

In November 1993, both the House of Representatives and the Senate approved the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE). Due to differences in each bill, FACE now goes before the conference committee. President Clinton has stated his strong support for the bill and has promised to sign it into law.

Due to the pervasiveness of violence, many state and local law enforcement officials have been unable to provide protection for health care providers and women seeking abortion service. Bombings, vandalism, and arson account for the most significant monetary damages. In addition, physicians face death threats, kidnapping, and attempted murder. FACE would make it a federal crime to block clinics and use violence or force against women obtaining services and health professionals.

Both versions of the bill include penalties for first-time and repeat offenders. Unlike the House version, the Senate amendment also reduces fines for non-violent offenses. Both bills allow for civil suits to be brought against the violators of this law; however, the House bill (H.R. 796) does not allow

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Change of Address Form

Please change my address to:

Name

Address

City, ZIP Code

Phone

Send changes of address (incl. name, new address, city, ZIP code, and phone number) to Lambda Letters Project, 6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.

Table 1. LLP Income and Expenses Statement, 1993

Income	(\$)
Ad space	130.00
Auction	500.25
Calendars	264.00
Contributions	7,749.30
Entertainment books	10,630.00
Income carried from 1992	2,802.61
Total Income	22,125.73
Expenses	
Advertising	78.00
Bank charges	167.00
Board meetings	113.70
Brochure	216.57
Calendars	300.00
Dues	120.00
Entertainment books	7,570.00
Envelopes	412.68
Legislative information	99.50
Miscellaneous	98.99
Photocopies	3,038.27
Postage	6,718.18
Software	44.95
Space rental	151.50
Supplies	384.02
Telephone	317.02
Travel	834.75
Voter data	25.00
Expenses carried from 1992	494.00
Total Expenses	21,184.13

1994 Calendar Sale!

Those three calendars we've described in previous newsletters are not only still available, but on sale! Whether the full-color calendar illustrating the march on Washington; the one that celebrates lesbian, gay, and bisexual families with a dozen delightful, black-and-white pictures; or the artful calendar of the male

Table 2. LLP Projected Budget, 1994

Income	(\$)
Ad space	340.00
Auction	1,500.00
Calendars	300.00
Contributions	11,602.00
Corporate contributions	5,000.00
Entertainment books	10,800.00
From 1993	800.00
Total Income	30,342.00
Expenses	
Advertising	120.00
Bank charges	120.00
Board meetings	240.00
Brochure	66.00
Business cards	40.00
Calendars	150.00
Dues	270.00
Entertainment books	8,640.00
Envelopes	171.00
Fees	100.00
Incorporation costs	490.00
Insurance	800.00
Photocopies	3,160.00
Postage	10,822.00
Printing	170.00
Software	120.00
Space rental	331.50
Supplies	120.00
Telephone	405.00
Travel	1,668.00
Total Expenses	28,003.50

figure—the one you want costs only \$10 (down from \$12), with half of that amount going to support Lambda Letters. To order your calendars, send a check or money order along with your order to Karen Roth, 4216 Robinia Place, Davis, CA 95616. For more information, call Karen at (916) 753-6670.

CDC Creates Condom Public Service Announcements

After years of ignoring the realities of human sexual behavior and urging young people to "just say no," the federal government has finally recognized that it must promote the use of latex condoms as a means of preventing the transmission of HIV. Thus is born the Prevention Marketing Initiative which includes a series of nine TV and four radio public service announcements (PSAs).

This month we are writing to Dr. David Satcher, the new Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to thank him for his role in this project. Your AIDS Legislative Analyst, who wrote this month's letter and article, has seen and heard the announcements; they are tame enough to be aired on *prime time* radio and TV. Some of them stress waiting to have sex, even within a committed relationship, while others urge "we just won't do it" without a condom or "use a condom every time." They are available in both English and Spanish, and feature both male and female speakers. Unfortunately, they are aimed at heterosexual audiences only.

Although our letter to Dr. Satcher congratulates him for the CDC's new initiatives, we have another important task to accomplish: to convince our local radio and TV stations to broadcast the 15-60 second-long announcements, especially during prime time. Because of the mechanics involved, this is a task which is much harder for the Lambda Letters Project to do. We would have to know the multiple stations in each of your areas, obtain their mailing addresses, and then generate a special mailing to them from each of you.

Won't you aid us in doing so? We can send you a sample letter to stations which gives them

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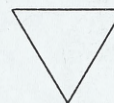
Judges Vote "for" Discrimination

This month's letter concerning lesbian/gay/bisexual issues is directed toward the California Judges Association (CJA), whose membership in a recent secret ballot defeated a measure that would include sexual orientation in the California Code of Judicial Conduct. This code already prohibits state judges from belonging to organizations which discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, and natural origin.

The Honorable E. Mac Amos, President of the CJA, claimed that adopting the amendment would produce "a negative impact on the public's perception of the judiciary's ability to deal with these issues in a fair and unbiased manner."

In agreement with the comment made by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Stephen J. Lachs, and published in the *L.A. Times*, we find the decision "an unneeded black eye" for the state's judiciary, the very institution committed to upholding civil rights for all citizens. Refusal to extend the spirit of the code to judicial conduct to gays, lesbians, and bisexuals only promotes injustice. By fiat, we remain acceptable targets for discrimination by judges, who are allowed to actively participate in organizations which seek to deny us equal protection under the law.

Since approximately half of the membership refrained from casting their vote, the 64 percent who voted to oppose the adoption truly represents only 32 percent of the total membership. Our letter this month asks the CJA to sensitize and actively inform themselves on issues involving discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, and to vote again. We ask them not to be satisfied with only half of their membership's participation, but to insist on justice for all, rather than allow the Right to discriminate for the few.



Community College Fee Increases Opposed

Please write to Governor Pete Wilson and ask him to eliminate the student fee increases, proposed in his 1994-95 budget, for students at California's Community Colleges. The budget proposes increasing fees from \$13 per unit to \$20 per unit. This means that a full-time student's fees would rise from \$390 to \$600 per semester. If these fee hikes are approved, fees for students at our Community Colleges will have increased by 400% since 1991. The increase falls particularly hard on people of color who have higher-than-average poverty and unemployment rates, and for whom the Community Colleges have been an important pathway to economic security.

According to the California Employment Development Department, the average December, 1993, unemployment rate for white Californians was 8.3 percent, while the rate was 13.0 percent for Hispanics and 14.1 percent for African Americans. According to the National Urban League, the African American poverty rate is up to 33 percent, the national average for unemployment among African Americans stands at 12.6 percent, while African Americans are paid an average of \$6,000 less per year than whites. Meanwhile, the proportion of African Americans who complete college has dropped from 8.4 percent in 1982 to 7.9 percent in 1991. This drop in graduation rates among people of color is reflected in statistics from California's Community Colleges. Since 1991 enrollments for people of color in the Community Colleges has dropped an average 44.02 percent while the drop in white enrollment has been 39.5 percent. Obviously, everyone has been hurt by the fee increases, but once again, people of color take the heaviest hit.

Please tell Governor Wilson that a 400-percent fee hike at California's Community Colleges is unjustified. Remind him of the heavy burden of

unemployment and poverty felt by many, but particularly by people of color. Urge him to remember that California's Community Colleges have been a traditional way out of poverty for people of color, as well as others, but that with the tremendous fee increases he has imposed, this route to financial security is being closed for too many people.

Governor Wilson wants to make California an attractive place for employers. Please remind him that a well-educated and trained work force is part of what employers look for before selecting a site for their new operations. Raising fees in our Community Colleges, until they are unaffordable, will dry up an important source of trained workers.

California is in its worst economic slump since the 1930s and has the highest unemployment rate in the country. Bringing in new employers who will put Californians to work can reduce both those problems. Nurturing our Community Colleges and keeping them affordable can be another important tool in combatting these problems. In addition, the improved economy would increase state tax revenues and reduce the state's budget problems. Please remind the Governor of these things and urge him to eliminate the proposed increases in Community College fees.

People of Color Issues Letter Writer Needed

This is a volunteer position. The person selected will, on a monthly basis, contact agencies to identify upcoming pieces of legislation or other topics relevant to people of color. Will compose letter which is sent to the membership and write a newsletter article providing background information on the subject of the letter. Will also attend monthly staff meeting in the Sacramento area on the third Sunday evening of each month. Interested persons may send LLP their, name, address, and phone number; or may call us at (916) 965-6851.

Did You Know?

Did you know about all the support that the people of color community has been providing to the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community and to people living with HIV/AIDS? Here is a review of some of that support.

On a National Level:

The NAACP President and Board of Directors called for a lifting of the ban in the military. They took considerable heat from their members and other African Americans for doing so.

Japanese American Congressman Robert Matsui (Dem.-Sacramento) has been a consistent supporter on lesbian, gay and bisexual issues and on AIDS. He has been a cosponsor for years on federal legislation to lift the military ban.

African American Congressman Louis Stokes (Dem.-Ohio), as a ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, has fought hard for increased AIDS funding. He is also a convener of the Congressional Black Caucus' Health Brain Trust, which studies important health issues, including AIDS.

Hispanic Congressmembers Luis Gutierrez (Dem.-Illinois), Jose Serrano (Dem.-New York), Xavier Becerra (Dem.-California), and Esteban Torres (Dem.-California) are all original cosponsors of HR 1538, the HIV Prevention Act, whose primary sponsor is Nancy Pelosi (Dem.-California).

Last September, during Congressional debate on the compromise plan on gays in the military, Luis Gutierrez, Esteban Torres, and Nydia Velasquez (Dem.-New York) spoke against the ban or had statements against the ban written into the Congressional Record.

On a State Level:

African American Assemblymember Marguerite Archie-Hudson (Dem.-Los Angeles) is a strong supporter of AIDS issues.

African American Assemblymember Willie Brown (Dem.-San Francisco) reintroduced the consenting adults bill year after year until it finally

passed. As a result, sex between lesbians or gays is no longer a felony.

African American Senator Teresa Hughes (Dem.-Los Angeles) introduced and obtained passage of legislation to provide AIDS education in California public schools.

African American Assemblymember Barbara Lee (Dem.-Alameda) is carrying LIFE AIDS Lobby proposed domestic partners legislation.

Latino Assemblymember Richard Polanco (Dem.-Los Angeles) has been very supportive on AIDS issues. He is endorsing a gay candidate (John Duran) to the 42nd Assembly District.

Latino Senator Art Torres (Dem.-Los Angeles) has been a champion on AIDS issues and lesbian, gay, and bisexual rights.

African American former Assemblymember, now member of Congress, Maxine Waters (Dem.-Los Angeles) is a strong supporter on AIDS issues.

African American Senator Dianne Watson (Dem.-Los Angeles) introduced and obtained passage of legislation requiring state and local police agencies to keep statistics on hate crimes, including those against lesbians, gays, and bisexuals.

Support Breast Cancer Research

Fifty thousand women die of breast cancer each year in America; 10 percent of them in California. This means that a woman dies of breast cancer every eleven minutes. As you complete your California income tax returns, consider making a contribution to breast cancer research here in California. You can do this by completing line 6, Part 2 on page 2 of Form 540A, or line 52, Step 10 on side 2 of Form 540. In either case, indicate the amount you would like to contribute to breast cancer research. If the state owes you a refund, the refund will be reduced by the amount you contribute. If you owe taxes your obligation will be increased by the amount of your contribution. In either case, your contribution will be tax-deductible as a charitable contribution on the following year's federal and state tax returns.

People of Color Issues

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strongly support the goals of that community. Up to this point we feared that dividing the letters among four subjects would dilute our effectiveness by producing too few letters on any one subject. With over 29,000 letters collected last year, that is less of a concern and we expect the number of letters collected to grow in 1994, in part, as we attract more people of color to the Project through the new subject.

It has certainly been clear that many women, who might otherwise not have done so, have been signing our other letters because they so appreciate our coverage of women's issues. We think the same thing will result from our support of people of color on their issues.

Lesbians, gays, and bisexuals are a minority. As such, we do not have the strength of numbers or money to, all by ourselves, reverse the monumental discrimination that we experience in our society. Our defeat on the military issue last year is a clear example of the fact that we need help.

People of color are our natural allies because they have suffered similar outrages. However, we can't expect them to go out on a limb in support of us unless we are also willing to support them on the issues that they care about.

In a sense, adding people of color issues is a payback to the many people of color who have supported lesbian, gay, bisexual, and AIDS issues in very critical ways over the years. For example, Willie Brown (Dem.-San Francisco) reintroduced the consenting adults bill year after year until it passed. As a result, having sex with someone we love is no longer a crime. Senator Diane Watson (Dem.), a black legislator from Los Angeles, introduced and obtained passage of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which mandates the counting of hate crimes, including those against lesbians, gays, and bisexuals. See the article "Did You Know?" for further details on this subject.

In summary, the staff believe we can handle the workload. We also expect that covering people of color issues will increase support of our other issues in their community. Supporting their issues seems a fitting response to the way they have supported us on our issues.

Clinic Entrances Act

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for punitive damages to be claimed.

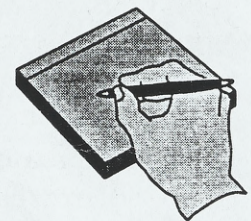
Neither the House nor the Senate bill violate legitimate First Amendment rights protected by the Constitution. The purpose of this legislation is to protect the constitutional right for women to choose to have an abortion. It does not seek to end peaceful demonstrations using traditional methods of expression, such as sidewalk counseling, picketing, and distributing leaflets. Only violence and force are penalized. Please sign the letter to Congress today!

Condom PSAs

Continued from p. 4

instructions on how to obtain a complete set of the audio or video PSAs. Then you, as an individual, can send this letter to any station you want.

If you wish to do this, simply include a note requesting it with you returned letters and we'll send you a blank form letter. Or, if you send us the following information, then we'll send these stations a letter on LLP stationery on behalf of all our members in your listening area. We need: the name of the station manager or PSA director, the station's call letters (please indicate whether they are radio or TV and give us their network affiliation, if any), address, city, state, and ZIP code. Please feel free to send us information on multiple stations in your area; we'll send you letters for all of them!



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12-Step Spiritual Retreat

The Gay Men's Spiritual Retreat has scheduled the second annual Spring Retreat for May 6 to 8. To be held at Camp Cedar Glen in Julian, California, the retreat will have approximately 100 participants from San Diego and throughout the country. The retreat is recommended for persons who are participants in any of the various 12-step programs and is an opportunity to become acquainted with the gay male recovery community and with the benefits of living a 12-step program. The theme of this year's retreat will focus on friendship and recovery.

Begun several years ago, the retreat has been designed for gay men to enhance and broaden their awareness of spirituality in recovery as aligned with processes found in 12-step recovery programs. The weekend will be alcohol- and drug-free. Activities will include discussion groups, group meditation, swimming, volleyball, horse shoes, pie eating, festive "camp" fires (costumes optional), hiking, communal meals, and other group or individual activities. All facets of the retreat are voluntary with the exception of the abstinence from alcohol or drugs.

Accommodations consist of modern furnished cabins. The \$90 cost includes five group meals and food throughout the retreat. The deadline for registration is April 27th. For more information, contact Trent at (619) 582-9263, Mark at (619) 291-0313, or Dave at (619) 232-1303; or write to GMSR at P.O. Box 34035, San Diego, CA 92163-4035.

Advertising Rates

Business-card sized ads (3.5" x 2") \$10 per issue

Quarter-page ads \$20 per issue

Half-page ads \$30 per issue

Full-page ads \$50 per issue

**Send payment and your camera-ready copy,
along with your name and phone number, to:**

**Lambda Letters Project
6212 Silverton Way
Carmichael, CA 95608**

The deadline for submission is the 25th of each month.

Lambda Letters Volunteer Classifieds

Signature Gatherers Needed—People from anywhere in the state are needed to bring sample letters to groups they already attend each month and ask those in attendance to sign the letters. Lambda Letters supplies the letters and provides postage both ways. If interested, call (916) 965-6851 or send us a note.

Auction Volunteers Needed—Sacramento residents are needed to ask businesses to donate items to our annual auction or to buy ad space in the auction program. Volunteers may also call our members about the auction. If interested, call (916) 965-6851 or send us a note.



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